

## Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

### Scoping Meeting Synopsis

Noel Wien Library, Fairbanks

May 28, 2003 at 10:00 am--Noon

The Noel Wien Library was nearly filled to capacity with committed volunteers and representatives of faith-based and other service organizations for the third statewide scoping meeting for Alaska's Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. As keynote speaker Lieutenant Governor Loren Leman outlined the vision that Governor Murkowski and he have for this effort. He was joined by the Department of Health & Social Services, Department of Corrections, Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Rhonda Boyles, North Pole Mayor Jeff Jacobson, Senator Ralph Seekins and Representative John Coghill, as well as many other people representing organizations that have had a long-time commitment to providing services in Interior Alaska, some for more than 50 years. Representatives from each of these groups provided valuable information on how they are participating in assisting with implementation of volunteer services.

One social service provider stated she and her colleagues were pleased and honored to have had the opportunity to give input regarding the best way to help people in the community. It was also said that community nonprofits offer an established and effective infrastructure, which will undoubtedly foster a successful partnership with the State.

When asked for suggestions on how the State and the faith/volunteer community could better partner with one another a couple ideas were suggested. One suggestion for change with counseling programs was to make funds available for assessments to identify specifics of need in order to target a more comprehensive treatment plan. Another recommendation was that all services and programs, both secular and nonsecular, should be required to provide a measure of quality outcome to tell those in Juneau that State monies are working effectively, which would help ensure future funding of successful/beneficial programs. Another individual suggested a reward/benefit system those non-profit agencies working together cooperatively.

Some voiced concern about "government red tape," which could make assistance so conditional that it would require too much time and energy to utilize or that assistance would be distributed too broadly to really be effective. Others spoke about the shared vision for all Alaskans: a safe, happy and healthy life. The consensus is that partnerships that will be forged among the State, the faith and community based organizations and Alaskans can and will make this vision a reality.

A presentation on the web-based company, GrantStation, was made at the meeting. GrantStation links nonprofits to sources of grant money, while also teaching how to secure the available funding. This company is applying for a Compassion Capital Fund grant with the intention of supplying memberships to the State of Alaska for distribution to qualifying organizations. Each membership provides one year of online access to GrantStation tools, resources and member benefits. To qualify for a free one year membership organizations must have six or fewer full time equivalent employees engaged in the provision of social services and an annual budget of less than \$450,000. If your organization qualifies and is interested in a subscription please contact Gwen Hall in Lieutenant Governor Leman's office via email at [Gwendolyn\\_Hall@gov.state.ak.us](mailto:Gwendolyn_Hall@gov.state.ak.us). To learn more about this company you can log onto GrantStation's website at [www.grantstation.com](http://www.grantstation.com) or call their toll free number (877) 784-7268.

Lieutenant Governor Leman responded to several questions and closed the meeting. The next work product will be the naming of the Task Force, expected to be within the next week.